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LEGEND OF THE MILL-POND. — The legend of the mill-pond, published by Miss Craddock in "Notes and Queries" in your December number, was the writer's earliest slate exercise in a country school nearly fifty years ago, and was taught him by an older pupil. The legend is supposed to be related as each part is being drawn. The climax is supposed to be reached when the tail is being formed, but tranquillity is again restored as we accompany the man on his homeward journey. The house represents the head of the bird; the man, the eye; the back yard, the hill; the pond, the body; the inlet and outlet to the pond, the legs and feet; the feathers on the body are supposed to be a flock of ducks resting on the pond. The man seizes his gun and runs toward the pond; the upper line of the neck is now rapidly drawn from the house to the pond; the ducks, being frightened, hurry-scurry away in an opposite direction, forming the tail; and the man, disgusted at his ill-luck, wearily returns home over the route forming the under line of the neck.

A. B.

HOW TO KEEP OFF WITCHES (AS RELATED BY A NEGRO.) — "Georgie, did a witch ever get after you?"

"Nor'm, but my mother, she knew a woman that was mightily bothered by a witch. Ev'y night, soon as de woman went to bed and tun over on her back, dat witch would come and jump on her and ride her hard, so she could n' move. So one night she fix for dat witch. She put pins in de seat of a chair, and when de witch come, she sot right down on de pins. Witches have to sot down befo' dey can git out de skin; dey can't ride you long as dey is in dey skin. Well, de witch sot down on de pins, and she stuck fas'. She could n' git out of her skin, and she could n' git up out er de chair, and she beg de woman to let her go, and she promise, ef she did, she would n' come back no more. Den de woman let her go. Nor'm, I ain't never seen no witch, but I got a horseshoe up over my do'. Dey say de witch got to travel all over de road dat horseshoe been 'fo' she can git in de house, and time *she* git back 't would be day. Some folks puts a sifter over de do', and de witch got to count all de holes in dat sifter, and a witch can't count but five; and when she gits to the five, she jumps through dat hole and is gone. Some folks can see witches better than others. A'n' Abby's son Allan, he went with me one night last fall to sit up with a girl that died, and all along the road he 'd stop and say he saw somethin', and then he would walk around and say somethin' was in his path, he could n' pass. Sometimes it was a dog, and sometimes it was a man with his head off, but I ain't seen nothin', and I ain't gwine wid him no mo'."

Mary Willis Minor.

BALTIMORE, MD.

TALES OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS IN PENNSYLVANIA. — Under this title, Mr. D. C. Henning, of Pottsville, Pa., has published in the "Miners' Journal" of Pottsville a number of traditional and historical narratives relating to the region of the Blue Mountains, a series which has attracted much

interest. In 1755 the colonial authorities established as many as forty forts and blockhouses along the Blue Mountains, from the Susquehanna to the Delaware. These were occupied for a number of years by colonial troops, and for many years formed a frontier, within which took place Indian forays. This line of forts was recently made known by a committee of the Pennsylvania legislature, and an examination of the colonial records made by Mr. Henning brought to light much historical matter of interest. The southeastern boundary line of Schuylkill County is the Blue Mountain range, and here were situated seven of the forts. It would seem that the hills formed the point of attachment of many Old World traditional stories concerning fairies regarded as mountain-dwellers, and that these ideas have lingered until within the recollection of persons still living, or only lately deceased. In the "Miners' Journal" of March 26, 1897, is printed a tale, apparently of German origin, possessing such characteristics. A youth of the name of Siegfried, having paid a visit to his promised bride, rather singularly called Chriemhilt, crossed the mountains during a thunder-storm and disappeared. Sixty-five years, a month, and a fortnight later the bride, now grown to an old woman and still unmarried, received a visit from this lover, who appeared on horseback, still wearing the costume habitual in the time when he had been lost to knowledge. This interview took place, according to the tale, in the presence of children. The old woman afterwards explained that she had been accosted by her lover, who was under the impression that he had remained only a few hours in the mountains with the spirits, whose splendid palaces and golden streets he described, and who were able to pass at will and in a moment from one end of the mountains to the other. The woman refused to accompany him, and one of the spirits of the mountain appeared, who claimed the suitor as his captive. At the prayer of Chriemhilt, however, he consented that after her death the prisoner should be released, and reunion effected in heaven. Such is the folk-tale, obtained from the relation of one of the children present at the advent of the suitor, and who in after days narrated the incident.

The story belongs to that class of tales of which the story of Rip van Winkle is a diluted example; the fair youth, marriageable and therefore an especial object of attraction to fairies, is carried away to the earthly paradise, in which he himself does not become old, and where three hundred years go by as a single day. The return to the bride reminds one of the tale on which is based Bürger's ballad of Lenore; but in the latter case it is the excessive grief of the girl that brings back from the grave the lover, who, as in the present case, is bound by a promise, but who is really dead, and not, as in the Pennsylvanian story, merely a captive of fairies. The tale shows that instruction even respecting European folk-lore might have been derived from the tales of Pennsylvanian Germans, had these been garnered in season; and it will be highly interesting, and a part of the mental history of the settlement in America, if even fragments can be disinterred.

Another story, related in the same paper of March 26, 1897, is of a

historical character, dealing with the carrying off by Indians, in 1755, of Regina Hartmann and her sister Susan. The story, of a highly romantic character, shows how much interest the scenery of the region may derive from its historical associations, if these are adequately set forth. For the anger of the Indians the writer gives a partial explanation in a trick practised on them by the successors of William Penn. "He could not know that some of these purchases, called 'walking purchases,' had created great dissatisfaction in the minds of these simple and originally honest folk, as, for example, when, in consideration of some guns, gunpowder, flints, clothes, blankets, and meal, the white purchasers should have a certain belt of land to extend in length the distance a man could walk in a day; they did not contemplate that the purchasers would ransack the country to find the fastest runner known, and that he would cover a distance of nearly a hundred miles, instead of pursuing the Indians' lazier pace, which would probably cover only twenty or thirty miles."

Among the early German settlers lingered in full force a belief in witchcraft and magic. It was believed that the sixth and seventh books of Moses, imaginary works, to which were ascribed supernatural virtues, were buried somewhere in the Blue Mountains. A certain Paul Heym, living near Lebanon about 1755, was supposed to possess the ability of transforming himself into various shapes. When hard pressed by Indian pursuers, he escaped by changing himself into a stump, and under the form of a wildcat was able to visit an Indian council and overhear the plans formed; from an arrow the beast received a wound in a paw, which afterward appeared on the arm of the wizard. When he left his house, Heym was in the habit of protecting it by a charm, written on a piece of paper, and regarded as also a protection against lightning. The words are preserved:—

In Namen Gottes geh' ich aus;
 Der Vater wahr' mir dieses Haus;
 Der Sohn mit seiner Lieb dabei
 Dies Haus bewahr' in aller Treu;
 Und Heil'ger Geist, lass nicht heran,
 Ein Sach das dies Haus schaden kann.

It will be seen that there seem still to linger in the memory of living persons survivals of the once abundant folk-lore of the Blue Mountains, and that these relics are well worth preserving and bringing into permanent form, a task which is contemplated by Mr. Henning.

W. W. Newell.

LOCAL MEETINGS AND OTHER NOTICES.

BOSTON. — *Friday, November 18, 1897.* The Boston Branch held its first meeting of the season at 8 P. M. at the Grundmann Studios. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Newell were the hosts, and Professor Putnam presided. Mr. Leo Wiener, instructor in the Slavic languages at Harvard University, was the speaker, and had as his subject, "The Folk-Lore of the Russian